

AFA UPDATE

A PROJECT OF THE ASATRU FOLK ASSEMBLY

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WILL A NATIONAL ASATRU GATHERING BE FEASIBLE THREE YEARS FROM NOW?

The catastrophe named Katrina brought into focus very real concerns about the future of the economy - and hence, about the future of large-scale Asatru gatherings.

Premium gasoline had already hit the three-dollar mark here in Nevada City before Katrina. Clearly, though the hurricane made the situation worse by destroying drilling platforms and other petroleum infrastructure, fuel prices were already on the rise. This trend is expected to continue, for three reasons: First, most of the world's oil-producing nations are past their peak production (the United States topped out in 1970) and are now in decline. New exploration is not anywhere close to keeping up with demand. Second, many of the world's oil-rich countries are politically unstable - Sudan, Iraq, and other nations come to mind. Third, worldwide demand is skyrocketing due to the modernization of China and India, and it will continue to do so for many years.

This means not only a higher cost of driving an automobile and flying on a plane, it also means higher costs of just about everything. Double-digit inflation is a distinct possibility. All this is going to make it difficult for folks to attend national-level Asatru gatherings like our upcoming "Winter Nights in the Redwoods." As a result, this may be the last chance some of you will have to attend a national AFA event without spending a very large amount of money.

All the more reason to come, if you can!

But there is another message here for us: The AFA must adapt. If it becomes impractical for most of us to attend national gatherings, we will need to rely on regional events instead.

All of these are things we will need to discuss in the coming weeks and months.

“Winter Nights in the Redwoods” is open to all AFA members and supporters. Contact us at info@runestone.org for more information!

SOME BIG ISSUES SET FOR WINTER NIGHTS DISCUSSION

The Winter Nights event was ambitious from the start, as the first major AFA event in six years. Rising prices and a worsening economy, as mentioned above, have convinced us to make some alterations to the agenda.

The leadership session is still vital for the future evolution of the AFA, and so is the “Fundamentals of Asatru” course. In addition, however, we will incorporate material on some or all of the following topics:

...Decentralized, yet coordinated and consistent, organization for the AFA

...Increasing the sense of bonding and mutual support of AFA members

...Building an AFA that is a rich and flexible mix of individual Asatruar, those operating at a kindred level, those practicing extensive networking, and others opting for an actual intentional community

...Ways to help ourselves and each other if the economy becomes much worse

This is NOT to say that if you are not at Winter Nights, you will have no voice in these weighty matters. Your input as a member of the AFA is always welcome and will be considered. Nevertheless, if these issues are important to you and you feel you have a lot to contribute, you’ll want to be with us in the redwoods.

Balancing these hard-headed and practical matters, it is important to me that we cultivate the spiritual...providing each of us at Winter Nights with a milieu conducive to a deepened sense of contact with, and experience of, the holy. Ultimately, it is with this spiritual power that we will change the world!

CAN’T COME TO WINTER NIGHTS, BUT WANT TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT?

Some of you, despite the best of intentions, just can't make it to Winter Nights. As a 501 c (3) nonprofit organization, the AFA can accept your donation and you can write it off your taxes, assuming you itemize.

Gifts of items for the raffle/auction are also gratefully accepted!

RELIEF EFFORT FOR HURRICANE KATRINA

Some of you may be hesitant to send hurricane relief through the usual organizations. Luckily, there are various projects underway that are sponsored by, and generally aimed at, those of us who follow the Way of our ancestors.

One of the best is Tee Wodening's endeavor, the Frige Fund. Tee can be contacted at FiberHall@yahogroups.com. In her words, "The Frige fund is designed to help heathens in trouble and with Hurricane Katrina we have heathens in trouble...The fund currently can aid in rebuilding the lives of families from basic food, clothing to household goods and other needs..."

The Frige Fund seems well organized and effective, and you need have no doubt about the integrity of the good people running it.

JAMES CHISHOLM'S TRANSLATION OF THE EDDAS: A "MUST HAVE!"

Some weeks ago AFA Update gave readers a heads-up on the impending publication of Jim Chisholm's volume, titled simply The Eddas. Our copy arrived as promised, and to put it mildly we are not disappointed!

This is the only translation of our "primary source" material done with the assumption that the reader will use the text for religious purposes and/or personal evolution. That alone makes it a "must have," but other features - like having the Old Icelandic and the English translation printed on facing pages for easy reference - make it even more valuable.

Jim's opus also comes with extensive notes and valuable extra chapters on how to use the text for spiritual, or magical, growth.

I am particularly pleased that the book is durably and beautifully bound, capable of being passed down the generations as a family heirloom! I want it in my family for a long time.

Sure, you can find the text online and download it for "free" - using up a load of paper and toner. But all you'll have is an awkward, unsightly pile. My recommendation is this: Buy it like I did, from Illuminati Books (www.illuminatibooks.net). You won't regret it.

CHOICE LINKS

Environment:

...Some great apes - chimps, orangutans, gorillas - could be extinct within one human generation.

<http://rense.com/general67/apes.htm>

...Ireland: Grass hailed as a source of clean energy -

<http://www.planetark.com/dailynewsstory.cfm/newsid/32386/story.htm>

Peoples:

...Pigments make redheads more prone to skin cancer.

<http://www.forbes.com/lifestyle/health/feeds/hscout/2005/08/29/hscout527664.html>

...”Kill the whiteness inside”: Self-hatred as a lifestyle -

<http://www.forbes.com/lifestyle/health/feeds/hscout/2005/08/29/hscout527664.html>

Archeology:

...Who shared the grave of Denmark’s last Viking king?

http://news.webindia123.com/news/showdetails.asp?id=112827&n_date=20050903&cat=World

...Norwegian boy’s playthings turn out to be a Viking hoard!

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,3604,1561192,00.html>

PETITIONS DELIVERED FOR THE NORWEGIAN WOLVES

Kimberley Remen, leader of the AFA’s project to save the endangered Norwegian wolves, recently delivered two thick packages containing more than 2,500 petitions to the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment. The petitions (which you can sign at <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/takeaction/399085910>) urge the government of Norway to “protect these few remaining wolves and to allow a viable population to develop within carefully monitored wolf sanctuaries in Norway’s national parks.”

Kimberley has plenty of other plans, to include a “Walk for the Wolves” next August 9th at multiple locations around the world. She can use some help on this endeavor!

Please drop her a line at Kimberley@troi.ws to find out what you can do to help.

In addition, please visit our Yahoo group, http://groups.yahoo.com/group/norwegian_wolf/ for updates on the wolf project as well as photos, various files, and other resources.

LORE CLASSES

The AFA sponsors twice-monthly classes on Eddic lore in the Sacramento area. Anyone interested in attending can contact us at info@runestone.org.

AFA MEMBERSHIP

The AFA can accomplish its ambitious purposes only if it has the support of a lot of enthusiastic people. In short, we need you as a member!

You can find an application form on our web site at <http://www.runestone.org> or you can contact us at info@runestone.org.

ODIN LIVES!

The groundbreaking radio program Odin Lives! is broadcast every Thursday night at 8 PM Eastern Time on a frequency of 7.415 MHz. This broadcast is repeated the next Tuesday morning at 12:15 AM on the same frequency. You can learn more by going to their web site at <http://www.odinlives.org>.

IMPORTANT DATES

September 9 - Day of Remembrance for Herman of the Cherusci. Herman learned the art of war under the Romans, then deserted the Imperial eagles to lead his tribe in revolt against the Mediterranean intruders. In the fall of the year 9 CE, he annihilated three legions in the Teutobergerwald, a victory which saved Germania from Roman occupation. Plant an oak tree, eat in a German restaurant, and remember Herman with a glass of fine beer from the Fatherland.

September 22 - Winter Finding. Now, at the fall equinox, is the time when day and night are of equal length. This is a harvest festival, and you can celebrate it with a meal at which you give thanks to the Gods for the powers of the soil. Raise a horn of your favorite drink to our two deities connected with fertility and prosperity - Freya, and her brother Frey.

October 8 - Day of Remembrance for Erik the Red. Erik was the stouthearted father of Leif Erikson, and a dedicated follower of Thor. Hot-headed and clever,

Erik made his mark on history by organizing the Viking settlement of Greenland. Raise a toast to this rascal, or read from his saga, in honor of his intrepid spirit.

October 9 - Leif Erikson Day. This holiday was first officially proclaimed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1965. Remind your friends of the Norse colonization of North America more than a thousand years ago!

Hail the AFA!

Stephen A. McNallen
Asatru Folk Assembly

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO SHOULD BE GETTING THESE UPDATES?
Please refer him or her to AFA_Bearclaw-subscribe@yahogroups.com.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE at <http://www.runestone.org>.